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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/533,334	05/18/2007	Terence James Roycroft	30451/04013	5157
24024 7590 05/07/2009 CALFEE HALTER & GRISWOLD, LLP 800 SUPERIOR AVENUE SUITE 1400 CLEVELAND, OH 44114				
EXAMINER OELSON, LARS A				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3617				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
05/07/2009		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

ipdocket@calfee.com
dcunin@calfee.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/533,334

Applicant(s)

ROYCROFT, TERENCE JAMES

Examiner

Lars A. Olson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 February 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 8-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 8-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. An amendment was received from the applicant on February 5, 2009.
2. Claim 7 has been canceled.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 1, 10 and 11 are objected to because of the following informalities: The term "wheel(s)" contains parentheses, which are only to be used for reference numerals. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 2, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roycroft et al. (US 5,531,179) in view of Kobayashi (US 4,255,943).

Roycroft et al. discloses an amphibious vehicle, as shown in Figures 1A-5, that is comprised of a body, defined as Part #2, retractable road wheels, defined as Part #3R in a retracted position, that are movable between protracted and retracted positions, as shown in Figure 5, a wheel drive shaft, defined as Part #10, that is connectable to a prime mover, defined as Part #4, an inner constant velocity joint, defined as Part #17,

and an outer constant velocity joint, defined as Part #18. Said vehicle is also fitted with a planing hull, as shown in Figure 1A.

Roycroft et al., as set forth above, discloses all of the features claimed except for the use of an inner constant velocity joint being of a fixed type, and an outer constant velocity joint being of a plunging type.

Kobayashi discloses a holding structure for a drive shaft in a vehicle, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, that includes a wheel drive shaft, defined as Part #4, an inner constant velocity joint, defined as Part #3, that is a Birfield ball-joint of fixed type, and an outer constant velocity joint, defined as Part #5, that is a double offset Birfield ball-joint of slidable or plunging type, as described in lines 58-66 of column 1, and shown in Figure 2. Said outer constant velocity joint by being of slidable or plunging type accommodates for changes in length of said wheel drive shaft, as shown in Figure 1.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, to utilize an inner constant velocity joint being of a fixed type, and an outer constant velocity joint being of a plunging type, as taught by Kobayashi, in combination with the amphibious vehicle as disclosed by Roycroft et al. for the purpose of providing an amphibious vehicle with an independent wheel suspension having a greater articulation angle range of a wheel with respect to a drive shaft.

6. Claims 3-6, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roycroft et al. in view of Kobayashi, and further in view of Gibbs (US 6,957,991).

Roycroft et al. in combination with the teachings of Kobayashi shows all of the features as claimed except for the use of a constant velocity joint with a decoupler that incorporates a synchromesh mechanism.

Gibbs discloses a power train for an amphibious vehicle, as shown in Figures 1-10, that includes a longitudinally mounted prime mover, defined as Part #8, a wheel drive shaft, defined as Part #7, a pair of decouplers, defined as Parts #24 and 26, and a pair of constant velocity joints, defined as Parts #28 and 30, where said decouplers can incorporate a synchromesh mechanism and are combined with said constant velocity joints, as described in lines 45-54 of column 5.

The examiner takes official notice that the use of a transversely mounted prime mover instead of a longitudinally mounted prime mover is well known in the art.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, to utilize a decoupler with a synchromesh mechanism in combination with a constant velocity joint, as taught by Gibbs, in combination with the amphibious vehicle as disclosed by Roycroft et al. and the teachings of Kobayashi for the purpose of providing an amphibious vehicle with a means to selectively decouple road wheels from a prime mover while said vehicle is in a marine mode.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Welschof et al. (US 6,390,928 and US 5,052,979), Sone et al. (US 6,267,682), Jacob (US 6,254,487), Murillo (US 5,899,814), Jacob et al.

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(US 5,611,733) and Welschof (US 4,476,950) disclose drive assemblies for vehicle wheels that include inner and outer constant velocity joints of fixed and plunging type.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication from the examiner should be directed to Exr. Lars Olson whose telephone number is (571) 272-6685.

lo

May 5, 2009

/Lars A Olson/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3617